

**Senate Bill 1041 Implementation
CalWORKs County Review Session Summary**

Inyo

April 13, 2016

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Welfare to Work Division
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CalWORKs County Review Session Summary

Introduction

Purpose of County Review Session

The purpose of the County Review Session is to obtain information regarding the county's ongoing progress in implementing program changes enacted by Senate Bill (SB) 1041 (Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012) and Assembly Bill (AB) 74 (Chapter 21, Statutes of 2013).

Scope of County Review Session

Specifically, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will determine the status of SB 1041 and AB 74 implementation, including but not limited to:

- Welfare to Work (WTW) participation requirements;
- Post WTW 24-Month Time Clock;
- Training methods provided to staff in order to implement SB 1041 changes;
- Data outcomes related to SB 1041 program changes;
- Family Stabilization (FS) Program;
- Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE);
- Implementation of Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT).

Goals of County Review Session

The CDSS' goals for the Review Session are to ensure that SB 1041 and AB 74 were implemented correctly by each County Welfare Department (CWD), to gather and share promising practices amongst all CWDs throughout the state, and to determine whether systemic or program issues relating to California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and the WTW program exist throughout the state. If any issues exist, they will be addressed by the CalWORKs Program Oversight Workgroup.

County Review Session General Information

A County Review Session was held on Wednesday, April 13, 2016, via a teleconference call. The county review team included three staff from the CDSS, WTW Division, CalWORKs Employment Bureau, along with Inyo County's Health & Human Services Assistant Director and Health & Human Services Supervisor. The county administrators provided valuable insight into Inyo County caseworker practices. The County Review Session consisted of a kick-off discussion, county administrator interview, and close-out with county staff.

Inyo County Health & Human Services Agency provides services at two locations that handle both CalWORKs eligibility and WTW. One office is located in Bishop and one is located in Lone Pine. Inyo County also has a call center that is operated from 9:00am-11:00am and 2:30pm-4:30pm. At the time of the County Review Session, Inyo County management explained they have Integrated Case Workers (ICW) handling CalWORKs eligibility and WTW services at both Inyo County Health & Human Services offices. There are specifically two ICWs handling the WTW caseload and there are

designated intake caseworkers at both offices. The first point of contact for an applicant seeking CalWORKs aid and services is with an ICW who performs the initial screening. Subsequently, an applicant meets with a designated intake caseworker to determine eligibility for aid, and then the applicant meets with a WTW caseworker to participate in OCAT which takes approximately one and a half to two hours to complete. Inyo County management also indicated they have an in-house social worker who collaborates with ICWs to develop Work Participation Rate (WPR) strategies by analyzing clients' barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. The social worker and ICWs meet once a week to discuss individual cases identified as noncompliant for reasons such as failing to attend CalWORKs appointments or nonparticipation in required activities. In addition to increased case management, the social worker then conducts home visits with such clients or meets with them at the Inyo County office. With a relatively small WTW caseload of twenty-seven households, Inyo County has the capacity to develop strong relationships with clients and provide case management and services on an individual level.

Demographic Area and Economy

Inyo County is located on the east side of the Sierra Nevada and southeast of Yosemite National Park in Central California; it is the second largest county in California in terms of geography. As of the 2010 Census, Inyo has a population of approximately 18,546 residents and 7,873 households. According to 2010 estimates, the median family income is about \$44,808. The 2010 Census reported Inyo County as having approximately 11 percent of the population as Native American and Alaskan Native. Due to the large number of clients receiving Tribal TANF in Inyo County, the size of the Tribal TANF program is equal to the CalWORKs program.

Inyo County's location amidst popular natural tourist attractions causes the tourism industry to play a significant role in the local economy. During the County Review Session, Inyo County staff stated that the amount of skilled and sustainable jobs available to residents is limited. According to the Office of State Planning, Economic Analyst Branch, Inyo County's public sector provides the majority of wage and salary jobs accounting for approximately 41 percent of total employment while leisure services accounts for about 18 percent and retail trade accounts for roughly 12 percent. At the time of the County Review Session, projections indicated that between 2015 and 2020, employment growth will occur in the government, professional and business services, and leisure services sectors.

Some of Inyo County's major challenges are a lack of available housing, child care, and transportation services. There is very limited housing available in the area and the amount of affordable housing is rare. Licensed child care is also very limited in Inyo County. Inyo County staff described the county as isolated, in terms of geography, and stated that transportation is an ongoing issue as there is limited access to public transportation. The 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS) shows that about 81 percent of employed individuals age sixteen and above drove or carpooled to work while only approximately 0.7 percent of individuals took public transportation. The lack of public transportation and the long driving distances to access social services and employment for those with private transportation causes additional barriers for clients in Inyo County.

Inyo County has one community college in the area named Cerro Coso Community College. This college is located on a hill and the local Dial-A-Ride provides students with transportation to reach this location. According to the 2010-2014 ACS, approximately 88 percent of Inyo County's population age twenty-five or older has graduated from high school, while only about 21 percent of the population age twenty-five or older has obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher. Inyo County staff explained that WTW exempt volunteers usually volunteer to participate in an educational program or a General Education Diploma (GED) program to earn a diploma; however, there is limited access to vocational or secondary education in the local area.

Implementation Strategies

Inyo County's SB 1041 implementation strategy consisted of reviewing CDSS' All County Letters (ACLs), All County Information Notices (ACINs), and other relevant regulatory changes. Inyo County management facilitated regular communication with staff on case-specific issues to develop a greater understanding of the new SB 1041 requirements.

During the County Review Session, it was noted that Inyo County staff reviewed the implementation of SB 1041 at monthly staff training meetings. The trainings consisted of reviewing ACLs and ACINs issued by CDSS and applying them to existing case scenarios as well as reviewing informational notices mailed to current participants. Inyo County faced several challenges during the implementation of SB 1041, one being the Affordable Care Act which was enacted during a similar time frame and required significant policy changes to the Medi-Cal program. Additionally, Inyo County had large staffing changes during and after the roll out of SB 1041 which hindered the retention of program knowledge.

Some of Inyo's Key Successes included:

- The social worker and ICWs meet once a week to discuss individual cases identified as noncompliant for reasons such as failing to attend CalWORKs appointments or nonparticipation in required activities. In addition, the social worker then conducts home visits with such clients or meets with them at the Inyo County office.
- Inyo County caseworkers, supervisors, and the in-house social worker meet once a week to review clients approaching noncompliance and they devise an outreach plan based on the individual client's circumstances.
- The Inyo County social worker collaborates with ICWs to develop WPR strategies by analyzing clients' barriers to employment and self-sufficiency.
- As a county with a small monthly client caseload, Inyo's ICWs have the opportunity to engage clients more closely to determine their personal needs and challenges. Additionally, the ICWs develop a great rapport and relationship with clients thus helping them become successful beyond the WTW program. ICWs reviewed WTW plans to ensure that the new WTW 24-Month Time Clock was not ticking when clients were participating in activities that met CalWORKs federal standards. The small WTW caseload has given staff the ability to meet on a weekly basis and identify clients who require further analysis

regarding their unique barriers to compliance and address issues before initiating the formal noncompliance process.

- Business practices in Inyo County have changed as a result of SB 1041 and the county has more flexibility in helping clients move toward self-sufficiency. ICWs are able to collaborate with clients in developing a WTW plan that fits their individual needs and goals. During the County Review Session it was stated that the flexibility of the WTW 24-Month Time Clock has generated increased participation as clients are assigned to activities suited for their circumstances and aspirations.
- Inyo County's staff is well versed with access to local resources such as other social service programs, nonprofit and community based organizations, and career development centers. Inyo County staff is able to direct clients to the appropriate agencies and organizations that may supplement the support provided by the CalWORKs program. In addition, Inyo County staff is involved with the Employment Collaborators Committee. The goals of the committee are to assist local residents in obtaining the skills needed to apply for and maintain employment and to provide opportunities for local residents to discover employment opportunities that they may not know are available.
- Inyo County also has a strong advocate presence and works closely with the Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action to enhance the delivery of services to clients.

Acknowledgments

The CDSS thanks the Inyo County Department of Health & Human Agency for working with CDSS in the scheduling of the teleconference session. The CDSS appreciates the open collaboration with CWD staff to ensure the continued success of the CalWORKs program.

Background and Data

Inyo at-a-glance

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|--|---------------------|
| Total Caseload | 108 |
| (Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report [CA 237 CW] Line Item 8a- November 2015) | |
| WTW Enrollees | 42 |
| (Source: CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Report [WTW 25/25A] Line Item 1- November 2015) | |
| Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance) | 53 |
| (Source: CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Report [WTW 25/25A] Line Item 1, 3A, and 31- November 2015) | |
| Reengagement Plan Received | Yes |
| Beginning Date of Reengagement | January 2013 |
| Consortium System | C-IV |

Data/Statistics available at time of County Review Session:

- Clients who had more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion totaled: **44**

- Clients who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion totaled: **17**
- Sanctions that were cured as a result of SB 1041 totaled: **4**
- Former short-term young child exempt clients (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 4) that have been reengaged totaled: **8**
- WTW plans that have changed as a result of SB 1041 implementation totaled: **21**
- Clients that have used the new once in a lifetime young child exemption totaled: **3**

Summary of Documents provided by Inyo County during County Review Session:

- Inyo County Health & Human Services Organization Chart: Document displays staff members within Inyo County Health & Human Services Agency offices.
- AB 74 County Welfare Department Family Stabilization (FS) Plan: Document displays the Inyo County FS Plan. (Ex: How clients will be informed of the program, how clients will be able to request participation, how Inyo County will determine eligibility for clients, etc.)
- AB X4 4 Short-Term Exemption County Reengagement Sequencing Plan: Inyo County Reengagement Sequencing Plan indicates the county contact and the date the county began reengaging individuals exempt from WTW participation under the short-term exemptions.
- AB 74 County Welfare Department Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE) Plan: Document displays the Inyo County ESE Plan. (Ex. How the county will utilize ESE funds, ESE program goals, strategies, etc.)
- CW 2205 Notice Sent to Inyo County Households: Inyo County notice sent to active CalWORKs households on November 9, 2012 informing clients about the implementation of SB 1041 and the new WTW rules.
- Services offered by Inyo County Health & Human Services First 5 Division and Public Health and Prevention. The flyers and brochures provided by Inyo County describe a lecture series that offers pertinent parenting information and support for families with children of all ages. Several programs are also offered through the First 5 Division such as the Positive Parenting Program, Positive Parenting Program for Teens, and the 24/7 Dad Challenge Program.

County Administrator and Caseworker Dialogue

The CDSS County Review Team used updated county administrator and caseworker interview tools following those released in ACIN I-42-13 regarding SB 1041 implementation as well as those released regarding OCAT such as ACL 15-09 and ACL 15-43. These tools were provided to Inyo County in advance of the County Review Process Teleconference Call.

WTW 24-Month Time Clock Implementation and New WTW Participation Requirements

Transitioning Clients

[Less than and more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013]

- As of January 1, 2013, Inyo County had 44 clients with more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit that had their comprehensive discussion. Additionally, Inyo County had 17 clients with less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit that had their comprehensive discussion.

Clients who failed to attend SB 1041 appointments

- At the time of the County Review Session, Inyo County had a sanction rate of approximately 34 percent. Inyo County staff stated that the sanction rate has changed since SB 1041 implementation. The sanction rate in December 2012 was approximately 28 percent; however, Inyo County had 4 sanctions that were cured as a result of SB 1041. Inyo County's sanction process has not significantly changed as a result of SB 1041 because the county adheres to the state's regulations outlining the noncompliance process. This includes active communications with clients such as contacting clients by phone, making home visits as appropriate and notifying clients of potential sanction by letter. Inyo County caseworkers, supervisors, and the in-house social worker meet once a week to review clients approaching noncompliance and they devise an outreach plan based on the individual client's circumstances. The county attempts to meet with the client and correct the noncompliance issue prior to initiating the state's formal noncompliance process.

New Young Child Exemption

- Inyo County had 3 clients who chose to receive the new once in a lifetime Young Child Exemption.

Post WTW 24-Month Time Clock

- During the time of the County Review Session, no clients in Inyo County had exhausted their WTW 24-Month Time Clock since implementation of SB 1041; therefore, no extensions have been requested and/or granted. Inyo County plans to use the WTW 24-Month Time Clock tracking tools available in the C-IV system and plans to perform a manual case reviews to ensure the WTW 24-Month Time Clock is ticked or not ticked in compliance with state regulations.

Family Stabilization (FS)

- Inyo County has a FS Plan and the county targets the FS program toward homelessness, mental health issues, substance abuse, and domestic violence services. Due to Inyo County's small population, the county did not have any clients who participated in the FS program at the time of the County Review Session.

Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE)

- During the time of the county review session, Inyo County is currently working on implementing the ESE Program which resulted from the passage of AB 74 as one aspect of the CDSS WTW Early Engagement Strategies.

OCAT Implementation

- OCAT was fully implemented in accordance with ACL 15-09 and ACL 15-43 on October 1, 2015. Two Inyo County staff attended the Train-the-Trainer course held in Kern County during May 2015 and on September 24, 2015, the Inyo County staff held an all-day training for all Inyo County ICWs. During the time of the county session, management staff noted that the tools have been very useful within their WTW program and interaction with clients.

Child Care Services

- Inyo County contracts child services out to a local child care facility named Childcare Connections. During the time of the County Review Session, the county was not able to provide an exact number of the child care take-up rate, but they stated they have a low child care take-up rate. During the time of the County Review Session, the county expressed they have not experienced a significant increase or decrease in numbers over the past five years. Inyo County staff stated that their child care take-up rate may be lower because the new young child exemption allows more clients to stay home with their children as opposed to using the child care provided by the county.

Conclusion

Successes

Inyo County maintains a ‘whatever it takes’ approach to assisting clients with obtaining higher levels of self-sufficiency. Throughout the policy changes of SB 1041, Inyo County Health & Human Services continued to work closely as a team and develop strategies to improve client participation and success.

- Inyo County management coordinates monthly meetings for ICWs to review newly release ACLs and ACINs. The county also maintains an ongoing list of ACLs and ACINs to be reviewed as staff training tools ranging from the initial implementation of SB 1041 to current guidance regarding actions of the WTW 24-Month Time Clock.
- Inyo County had a series of staffing changes with a high turnover rate during the implementation of SB 1041 but during 2015-2016, the county saw consistency and retention of key staff.

Inyo County has a notable noncompliance program and its’ relatively small population provides the opportunity for more personalized case management.

- The social worker and ICWs meet once a week to discuss individual cases identified as noncompliant for reasons such as failing to attend CalWORKs appointments or

nonparticipation in required activities. In addition, the social worker conducts home visits with such clients or meets with them at the Inyo County office.

- Inyo County caseworkers, supervisors, and the in-house social worker meet once a week to review clients approaching noncompliance and they devise an outreach plan based on the individual client's circumstances. Inyo County's approach to the noncompliance process involves diligently communicating with at risk clients and addressing issues or concerns before initiating the formal noncompliance process.
- Inyo County staff indicated that the OCAT process has provided meaningful information about client barriers and personal needs. Inyo County's small WTW caseload has given staff the ability to meet on a weekly basis and identify clients who require further analysis regarding their unique barriers to compliance.

Inyo County Health & Human Services, First 5 Division offers several programs to improve and build upon parent-child relationships.

- The First 5 Division offers a Positive Parenting Program that equips parents with skills to manage and encourage positive behavior amongst children of all ages as well as a Lecture Series that informs parents on child development from birth to age twelve.
- The First 5 Division also offers the 24/7 Dad Challenge Program that meets weekly so fathers can participate in one-on-one activities with their children. The 24/7 Dad Challenge is an eight week class promoting fatherhood, co-parenting, positive discipline, communication, and work and family balance.

Inyo County partners with local employment agencies through its participation in the Employment Collaborators Committee whose goal is to assist clients in obtaining skills needed to apply for and maintain employment.

- The Employment Collaborators Committee includes the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance office, Inyo National Forest Service, Tribal TANF, Bishop Paiute Tribal Administrators, California Indian Manpower Consortium, Sierra Employment Services, and Owens Valley Career Development Center.
- Owens Valley Career Development Center offers a Career Education Program to increase occupational and educational opportunities for Native Americans.
- Sierra Employment Services is a full service employment agency focused on temporary staffing as well as direct/hire placement employment opportunities. These services are offered free of charge to assist clients seeking part-time or full-time employment.

Inyo County has a strong advocate presence with the Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action.

- This non-profit organization serves clients in Inyo, Mono, and Alpine County and strives to empower vulnerable communities while advocating on behalf of their needs. Inyo County works with this non-profit organization to direct clients toward resources such as food banks, energy assistance programs, subsidized child-care, head start/preschool programs, and available low-income housing.

Challenges

Inyo County's rural location limits the amount of upward mobility and job opportunities available to clients. The lack of available, affordable housing is an ongoing challenge to financial and residential stability.

- During the County Review Session, Inyo County staff stated that the amount of skilled and sustainable jobs available to residents is limited as the tourism industry plays a significant role in the local economy.

Inyo County experiences ongoing issues with transportation.

- The lack of public transportation creates a barrier for clients to access necessary social services and employment opportunities.
- The long driving distances to access social services and employment for those with private transportation causes additional barriers for clients in Inyo County.

There is a lack of higher education and GED programs available in the area.

- Inyo County has one community college in the area, the local Dial-A-Ride provides students with transportation to reach this location. Inyo County staff explained there is limited access to vocational or secondary education in the local area which results in few opportunities to obtain employment in diverse sectors.

Key Recommendations

- Inyo County should continue developing and implementing policies and procedures with staff to meet SB 1041 compliance requirements. During the County Review Session, Inyo County staff expressed that a few clients are expected to approach the end of the WTW 24-Month Time Clock during fall 2017. The CDSS recommends that Inyo County continue diligently tracking the status of clients' WTW 24-Month Time Clocks and engage clients timely to have a seamless transition to post-WTW 24-Month Time Clock participation requirements.
- The CDSS recommends the county continue working closely with the Employment Collaborators Committee and encourages the county to continue developing the ESE program to provide additional work opportunities for CalWORKs clients. The CDSS also recommends the county maintain its positive rapport with the advocate community to ensure the needs of clients are addressed through business practices and local resources.
- The CDSS encourages the county to maintain a strong relationship with the local community college and seek additional opportunities for clients to enroll in diploma programs and other post-secondary education institutions.
- Inyo County should also consider evaluating the need for additional transportation services to assist clients with limited public transportation to services and activities.

- In addition, CDSS encourages Inyo County to foster relationships with other counties on promising practices and best practices utilized within WTW program which may benefit their county WTW program.

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